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ARTICLE V.

THE DIVINITIES OF THE GATHAS.

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It may be doubted whether the translation of any text which can be rendered only by comparison of its vocabulary with the words used in other dialects than that in which it is written can ever be anything else than uncertain. The etymology of a term may give no hint whatever of its precise force as fixed by a series of adjustments to others during the successive periods of the growth of a tongue, or by the more rapid changes that it may have undergone in consequence of modifications, often due to the teachings of individual leaders, in the intellectual and religious conceptions of the people. Translations based upon the meaning of ultimate roots are to be regarded with even more distrust than others; they may indeed seem clear and consistent, simply from the absence of any special significance that they may have had to the people among whom the original text was written; but this clearness, like the apparent completeness of certain definitions in the natural sciences, is due to our ignorance or disregard of the really specific character of the thing in question.

The difficulty is most felt in dealing with texts of limited compass, such as the old Persian cuneiform inscriptions and the Gāthās, in which the best method of studying a difficult word, namely the intercomparison of all the passages in which it is used, can be applied to only a limited extent; in the Gāthās a large percentage of roots and forms occur but once. In the inscriptions, to be sure, the subject-matter is so simple and so monotonous in character that any possible shortcomings in the result are less perceptible; in the Gāthās, in which the conceptions are, if not profound, at any rate obscure, the brevity of the text is perhaps the greatest difficulty with which translators have to contend.

But there are a few words in the Gāthās, used, at least in some strophes, as proper names, which occur very often, so often that it would seem that some final conclusions might have been attained with reference to their inflection, syntax, and meaning. *Asha* occurs 156 times in the 238 strophes, and *vohumano* 121 times. Yet one has merely to glance at the successive translations, from Spiegel to Caland, to find that no certainty has been reached in any one of these points; not only are there great and important differences between the renderings of different translators, but also between the successive translations from one and the same hand. Finally, Caland, after taking an altogether new direction in the treatment of these words, and Geldner, in partly assenting to Caland's view, have, in different ways, practically pronounced the questions connected with their cases and government insoluble (see KZ. xxxi. 260; xxxii. 323).

In the most complete and by far the most impressive among the later translations, the terms in question are so treated that it is often quite impossible to determine whether a given word represents *asha* or *vohumano*, or even one of the names of one of the minor "divinities." This translation, by the frequent use of "my" and "Thy," "within us," etc., has undoubtedly gained in clearness, as other translations have also gained in clearness by the free use of adverbs (now discarded by Geldner), and of a great variety of nouns and adjectives. But these expedients, which are aided by a sporadic use of capital letters, give to certain passages in the English or the German version a definite and diverse significance that is certainly not marked in the original. The original, so conceived, could never have been understood; while any one who may think that a personal significance always attaches to the words in question must, of course, regard such renderings as mistranslations.

But all translations, so far as made, should be regarded as in great part tentative; and not merely is severe adverse criticism, but perhaps any strong expression of individual opinion, altogether out of place. More than any other ancient document, the Gāthās require deliberate weighing, and by more than one mind; the thought is too indistinct to permit of complete representation in the current terms of our modern tongues; a special vocabulary must grow up for it, as for some systems of metaphysics, and in the course of this growth more than one experiment must be tried, and tested by more than one student. The personal equation becomes of importance here, as nowhere else. One student may think that another, who has been trained to exegetical study of a different document, held to be inspired, has thereby acquired a mental temper somewhat unfavorable to the study of the Gāthās; and yet the former

should be quite ready to confess that a downright positive mental turn, acquired by some study of the physical sciences, is an equal, perhaps a greater, disadvantage. This last named disposition may perhaps betray itself in the following pages, in which I have brought together some evidence leading to the question whether the want of clear conceptions in connection with the names or persons discussed, with some inattention to the choice of befitting constructions, on the part of those to whom the present form of the hymns is due, may not serve for a partial explanation of some of the minor difficulties. Most translators feel that the text must be taken as it stands; there is no accompanying literature, and we are not more in a position to determine what forms ought to have been used, and what the poet should have said, than astronomers are in a position to calculate the orbit of Sirius; the hypothesis advanced tries to show that the choice of forms and the spirit of the whole harmonize.

Some of the statistics given would not be required in the study of any other text; but, where all is obscure, no one can foretell the quarter whence light is to be expected, and, in the Gāthās, not even the common concords can be taken for granted. Some passages (not always the same for each subject) are entered as "obscure;" part of these are so regarded by every one; for others, there are as many interpretations as commentators, and the difference of opinion has rendered the passages in question unsuitable for drawing inferences. Translations of doubtful certainty, made because nothing better seems to offer itself, do not advance Gathic scholarship, and are to be deprecated by all students of comparative religion. Space for detailed reasons in each case could not be spared. Finally, the obscurity itself is to be considered a legitimate result of conditions such as those inferred at the close of the paper, and one of the main sources of the evidence in favor of the hypothesis advanced there.

A study of all the passages involving the names of lesser importance, such as *ārmaiti*, etc., shows that with a very few exceptions they belong to one of two classes, so that the statistics are limited to the uses of *asha* and *vohumano*.

1. They add nothing to an already existing difficulty. Thus, in *vāo mazdā ahurā hadā ashā vahistācā manānhā khshath-rācā*, the plural *vāo* is already difficult because *ashā* is governed by *hadā*; (*vahistācā manānhā* and) *khshath-rācā* make no difference, so far as concerns the purpose of the paper.

2. Or, similarly, the passage may be explained in accordance with principles applied to an *asha*- or to a *v. manah*- in the same strophe.

All not falling under 1 and 2 are quoted.

Every one who has busied himself with the Gāthās will, I think, agree with me in feeling that the details of notes made

in several consecutive readings of the whole would show some discordance. Still less can entire accord as to all points be expected from two different students. But some differences in interpretation would not alter the general result; statistics applied to language are of only approximate validity, and precise figures should not be pushed too far.

Attributes or functions connected with the words asha and vohumano.—In the following summary, which recognizes no authority but the Gāthās themselves, *asha* is treated throughout as a noun. The distinction, so far as concerns this list, is of less importance than would appear at first sight, since an act, quality, or character may be connected with *asha* alone, or with the supreme divinity with *asha* as attribute. As regards the general conclusion, namely that the term is generally used without full significance, the treatment as adjective would merely add to its force.

I. Attributes of *asha*.

1. The word is used in such a connection that nothing can be inferred as to the function :

30. 1; 34. 1. 14; 43. 1 (but see KZ. xxx. 322), 9, 10; 45. 6; 46. 15; 49. 10 (perhaps "personified"); 50. 8, 9; 51. 10;

or it merely implies excellence :

28. 4; 30. 5; 31. 16; 33. 5; 34. 2; 43. 16; 44. 2, 10; 46. 4, 10, 12; 48. 8, 12; 49. 2, 3, 5, 9; 50. 2, 5, 11; 51. 1, 4, 11, 13, 17, 18, 21; 53. 5;

as also in the expression *gaēthāo ashahyā*, or equivalent :

31. 1; 43. 6;

and as furthered by the good :

31. 22;

with special emphasis in

38. 5; 32.4 (almost as one of the "Trinity"); 43. 12; 53. 3.

2. Somewhat more significance is seen in those strophes in which *asha* is agent or means in bestowing blessings or gifts, generally of indeterminate character; some of these may refer to revelation, and in some a "personification" is possible :

38. 1, 2; 31. 3, 5; 33. 10, 12; 34. 6; 43. 2; 44. 1; 50. 3; 51. 2; 53. 1.

Also where the word is used in the ablative, with or without *haeā*, as the source of qualities which should impart desert :

28. 10; 31. 2; 33. 5; 43. 14; 46. 19; 47. 1; 51. 5, 22;

or connected with the final reward :

46. 7; 50. 7?

or with temporal blessings for the prophet :

44. 18;

or where *asha* appears as protector :

44. 15; 48. 9; 49. 8;

or as overcoming the *druj* :

48. 1.

still more where *asha* is connected clearly with revelation and with the *māthra* :

30. 9 ; 31. 6 ; 33. 6, 13 ; 34. 13, 15 ; 44. 7 ; 45. 8 ; 46. 2?, 17 ; 48. 3 ; 49. 1, 6 ; 50. 6 ; 51. 16 ;

or in some way with the origin of the prophet's teaching :

46. 9 (*ashā*) ;

asha aids to a knowledge of *vohumano* :

34. 8, 12 ;

and is connected with the altar-flame :

34. 4 ; 43. 4 (cf. 43. 9) ;

asha is created by *ahura* :

31. 8, 7 ; 44. 3 ; 47. 2 ;

is proclaimed by the prophet :

31. 19, 22 ;

with *ahura* furthers plant-growth :

48. 6 ;

is specially connected with *ārmaiti* :

30. 7 ; 44. 6 ; 46. 16 (personified?) ; 48. 11.

3. In the following strophes *asha* seems to be treated as a person, although even then without distinct attributes :

When said to be *hazaoshem*, etc., with *ahura* :

28. 8 ; 32. 2 ;

and especially to have a will like *ahura* :

46. 18 ;

is an object of praise, sacrifice, or invocation :

28. 3 ; 31. 4 ; 32. 6, 9 ; 33. 14 ; 49. 12 ; 50. 4 (also *khshathra*) ;

and of protection :

28. 11 ;

and of reward, on the footing of *ahura* :

34. 3 ;

asha's personal agency in giving specially marked :

28. 7.

A personal being seems meant in 34. 7.

Is subject (with others) to *ahura*'s will :

29. 4 ;

with *ahura* the possessor of *khshathra* :

34. 5 ;

with *ahura*, protects the prophet :

50. 1.

the unity of the "Trinity" (and *khshathra*) asserted :

33. 11 ;

the "Trinity" have a common home :

30. 10 (cf. however 46. 7 ; 50. 7) ; 44. 9 ;

an abstract meaning would constitute nearly an equivalent expression :

33. 3, 8 ;

and would be meaningless in 32. 13, since there is reason to believe that the Zarathustrians were not unwilling to make converts.

Asha, with *ahura*, not to be annoyed :

28. 9 ;

certain persons are preferred to *asha* :

32. 12 ;

the *drug* is to be delivered into *asha's* hands :

30. 8 ; 44. 14 ;

holds judgment with *ahura* and *ārmaiti* :

47. 6.

The personality is well marked in 29. 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, although a mere personification is more easily supposed here than in some of the above.

I have not ventured to classify 29. 11 and 33. 7, although nothing in them militates against conclusions that may be drawn from the above.

The following are obscure to me :

30. 1, 13, 21 ; 34. 9, 10, 11 ; 44. 8, 13, 20 ; 45. 4, 9, 10 ; 46. 3, 9 (*ashāi*), 13 ; 48. 7 ; 50. 10 ; 51. 15, 20.

(*asha* occurs in composition in several strophes, as in 28. 6 ; 51. 3.)

II. Attributes of *vohumano*.

1. The word is used in such connection that nothing can be inferred as to the function :

28. 5, 6 ; 31. 17 ; 32. 9 ; 49. 7, 10, 12 ; 50. 3, 11 ;

or it merely implies excellence :

28. 2, 7, 10 ; 29. 10 ; 33. 10, 12 ; 34. 6 ; 46. 2 ; 48. 12 ; 49. 2, 3, 5 ; 50. 7, 8, 10 ; 51. 4, 7, 11 ; 53. 3, 4, 5 ;

so that evil men leave *vohumano* :

32. 4, 11 ;

vohumano furthers the *gaēthāo* and the pious :

46. 12, 13 ; 47. 1 ;

and pleases the soul of the Kine :

28. 1 ;

the deeds of *vohumano* :

34. 10, 14 ; 50. 9 ;

various phrases, paths of *vohumano*, etc. :

33. 13 ; 34. 12, 13 ; 43. 2, 4 ; 48. 3, 6, 11 ;

the phrases "all the time," etc., of *vohumano* cannot be further defined from indications in the Gāthās :

28. 9 ; 43. 1.

2. Somewhat more personal significance is seen in those strophes in which *vohumano* aids the prophet :

31. 4 ; 47. 2 ;

especially in rewarding his adherents :

46. 18 ;

and in securing to him gifts from men :

46. 10 ;

and when connected with revelation :

34. 15 ; 51. 16 ;

and in inspiring or accompanying the prophet's teaching :

29. 7 ; 46. 9 ; 50. 6 ;

appearing as mediator :

43. 7, 9, 11, 15 ;

ahura knows with or through *vohumano* :

32. 6 ;

vohumano is connected with the prophet's praise or sacrifices ;

33. 8, 14 ; 45. 6 ;

ukhdhāis v. m. may indeed mean nothing more than words of righteousness :

46. 14 ; 48. 9 ;

vohumano is created by *ahura* :

31. 8 ; 44. 4 ; 45. 4 ;

sustained by *dāmis ashem* :

31. 7 ;

is connected with *ārmaiti*, or leads to a knowledge of her :

30. 7 ; 34. 9 ; 43. 16 ; 44. 6 ;

accompanies *sraosha* :

44. 16 ;

is far from those who know not *asha* :

34. 8 ;

and aids *khshathra* :

30. 8 ; 31. 6.

3. More personal in the following strophes :

an object of sacrifice or invocation :

28. 3 ; 30. 1 (if objective genitive) ; 50. 4 ;

and of protection :

28. 11 (cf. 9) ;

with *ahura* is a protector of the prophet :

50. 1 ;

the unity of the "Trinity" is asserted, or *vohumano* is united with *ahura* :

32. 2 ; 33. 11 ;

the "Trinity" have a common home ; *vohumano* in heaven :

30. 10 ; 32. 15 ; 33. 5 ; 43. 6 ? 44. 9 ; 46. 16 ;

with *ahura* possesses *khshathra* :

34. 5 ;

a translation implying merely a mental tendency would involve an equivalent expression :

33. 3 ;

vohumano is not to be annoyed :

28. 9 ;

is agent in destroying *bendva* :

49. 1 ;

and specially contrasted with *acistō anhus* :

30. 4 ;

In the following rather long list, I have not classified the attributes, but find nothing to add to the above :

29. 11 ; 31. 5, 10, 21 ; 33. 7 ; 34. 11 ; 44. 8, 13 ; 45. 9a, 10 ; 46. 3 ; 47. 3 ; 48. 7 ; 51. 21.

The following are obscure to me :

28. 4 ; 33. 9 ; 34. 3, 7 ; 44. 1 ; 45. 9e ; 51. 2, 15, 20.

The indeterminate character of the conceptions connected with these words, whether considered as names of persons or regarded as abstract qualities, is the noteworthy feature in the above enumeration. While it will probably meet with some dissent, it is not easy to discover how the fair sense of the hymns themselves, considered without reference to traditional interpretation, can imply anything more to the modern reader, or, in the absence of other texts, to the ancient. The adverbs freely used by Geldner are not more significant, and, while he has now withdrawn this method of rendering, it does not yet appear what more substantial significance is to supply their place. Meanings such as "das Gesetz" seem too closely connected with the also now relinquished translation of the word as an adjective. An aspect of greater distinctness appears at first sight, but only at first sight, to result from the periphrases supplied by the various commentators ; *ashahyā gaēthāo*, 'the children of the kingdom,' unless the phrase had a mystical implication of which no trace can be found in the hymns, is merely the equivalent of 'righteous persons,' or, what means still less, the followers of the divinity. Renditions such as 'heaven' have no relation to the etymology ; and the doubtful merit of seeming to meet the supposed necessity of forcing a deeper meaning upon the particular strophe hardly counterbalances the very decided demerit of being at variance with the greater number of passages.

It is very true that a large proportion of the passages in the New Testament and in the Christian hymnology and ritual containing the names of one of the persons of the Christian Trinity would equally fail in giving full and defined meaning, since prayer and praise do not aim at teaching doctrine. Still, somewhere, in such a collection of citations, we should find the substance. It is also true that, on any theory of the origin of the Gāthās, they must be supposed to have been accompanied by a system of law and of positive teaching, delivered in some form, since there was a service and a priesthood, and Zarathus-

tra was not one to have neglected the social and political organization of the body of the faithful; were there no other difficulties, the present one might be so explained; but there are other difficulties. Nor, finally, to conclude the résumé of whatever may be said against the conclusions to be drawn from the above summary, must the radical meaning of the names themselves be forgotten. In Mills's translation, particularly, this, varied in a manner hardly to be defended from the text, does duty in a most remarkable way, adding materially to the impressive solemnity of the version. Ample allowance must certainly be made for the moral effect which the use of the terms may be supposed to have produced; but *vohumano* is nevertheless but one and a single term; it is not a collection of a variety of phrases, each freshly suggestive of a different aspect of religious sentiment; in most passages it has no more distinct and obvious connection with the context than any simple proper name, of derivation unknown to the people, might have had; often one name can stand as well as another, and, in fact, one name is often replaced by another, even of the inferior divinities, without obvious difference in the thought. The names *asha* and *vohumano*, especially, are almost absolutely interchangeable, and, when the two are mentioned together, nothing is added to the content of the passage. This last is also true of the others, *ārmaiti*, *sraosha*, etc.; the names are heaped together in a way that reminds the reader of the expletive epithets in Homer, or of the similar epithets and vocatives in the Mahābhārata. I am speaking not of genetic connection, but of rhetorical resemblance; and one is tempted to ask whether the motive is not the same in all three. The phenomena in the Gāthās, at all events, greatly resemble the treatment given to words having the value of proper names.

Asha has perhaps a more marked personality than *vohumano*, and may be said to be conceived as a more remote entity, while *vohumano* acts more frequently in the capacity of mediator between *ahura* and man: at least, this is the impression made on my mind at every repeated reading of the whole, although I find it difficult to prove such a conclusion from the details in the summary. But neither these characters nor any other can serve in the slightest degree in the interpretation of any single strophe. The association of *asha* with the altar-flame must be considered a matter of some importance.

The peculiar difficulty already referred to, and noticed by all students of the Gāthās, in the manner in which quality, personification, and person are considered to blend with each other, is common to all hermeneutics, and depends less on the character of the special strophes than on the attitude assumed by the reader. Nothing can be more certain than that the Jehovah of the Old Testament is a person, and yet there is

hardly a single passage in the whole into which we cannot read an abstraction, if so disposed. It is the merest truism that the sense of the parts must be determined by that of the whole, and, considering the unmistakable evidence afforded by some of the passages, it is not easy to see what character could have been assigned by the ancient reader or hearer to the simple, unqualified, and monotonously repeated *asha* and *vohumano* other than that of simple personality, and this too on each and every occasion when the words were uttered. In this particular *ahura*, *asha*, and *vohumano* seem to demand the same treatment, and the problem for the translator is the same as that presented in rendering texts involving the names of Indra, Zeus, Jupiter, and Jehovah. Perhaps the name of Agni affords a nearer parallel. On the other hand, it must be noted that there is less certainty about some of the minor "divinities," especially *khshathra*.

No other text presents so complete a lack of attributes special to the individual divinities. The Veda, indeed, often assigns the same function to more than one god; but the functions, in themselves, are sufficiently distinct. The Assyrian, less so the Babylonian, presents some phenomena parallel in this respect to the Gāthās, but it is plain that this is due to the obliteration of the distinct functions belonging to an earlier nature-worship, under a tendency towards an eclectic handling of diverse old beliefs. This may have been the case with the Gāthās, but there is no evidence pointing in this direction; such attributes of *ahura* as have been referred to this source are due to the universal tendency to assume the most distant and inaccessible regions that are known, particularly the bright heavens, as the home of the supreme divinity.

I withhold some statistics with reference to the question of the existence in the Gāthās of the doctrine of a Trinity, since it is virtually answered in the preceding summary. *Asha* and *vohumano* are more frequently mentioned than the other divinities except *ahura*, and in consequence are more frequently connected with his name. If the word Trinity is to be regarded as anything more than a convenient method of referring to the three divinities, we must also speak of a dual being, on account of the far more striking association of *asha* with *ahura*, and, what is absurd, of a quadruplicate being, etc., including *khshathra*, etc. The unity of two or more of these persons is indeed asserted; parallel expressions can probably be found in the literature of every polytheism; but, unless supported by a considerable body of kindred teaching, they prove, for the people, simple polytheism and nothing more; for the earnestness and abiding faith of the metaphysical teacher who utters the sentiment, absolutely nothing. At all events, there is nothing in the

Gāthās to point to the existence, at that time, of the dogma of a triune godhead, whose persons have specific attributes, such as are seen in the persons of the Christian Trinity. Neither here nor elsewhere shall we find substance in the shadows of the Gathic conceptions.

It is evident that the religion is not a new religion. The individual impress which always characterizes a first creation is absent. Nor is it a religion which has been refined away by thinkers of a tendency like that of the various classes of Illuminati, Theosophists, etc. Such teachers have at least a conscious system.

The use of number.—The use of number, singular or plural, in inflected words connected with the names of divinities, although for the most part in full accordance with the ordinary rules of Indo-European grammar, shows some significant peculiarities. In classifying the various uses I have proceeded, as already said, on the supposition that the ordinary concords require testing, and have, for the present, passed over the solution offered by Caland.

It so happens that no question can arise with reference to any of those few strophes in which the name of the supreme divinity does not occur, except 29. 3, *ashā paitimravat*; 30. 7, *khshathrā jaçat manavhā vohu*, etc., *dadat ārmaitis*. 43. 10 might perhaps be questioned were it perfectly certain who the speakers are. I class it as "obscure," and with it the following, all containing the name of *ahura* (in some form):

29. 8, 11; 30. 9; 31. 10; 33. 7; 34. 11; 43. 10; 44. 8, 9 (after a), 17; 45. 4, 11; 46. 2, 7, 9; 48. 7; 50. 6; 51. 3; 51. 20.

In the remaining strophes:

I. Wherever the name of *ahura* occurs alone, the singular only is used. (31. 5 is put here, as *vaocā* addresses *ahura* alone.) The plural of majesty is therefore not used:

29. 4, 10c; 30. 11; 31. 5 (*vaocā*), 11, 14, 15; 32. 1, 7, 8, 16; 33. 4; 43. 3, 5, 8; 44. 5. 12, 19; 45. 3; 46. 1, 6; 48. 2, 4; 51. 9; 53. 2. And the following (see page 191, line 3 from below):

31. 9 (*ārmaitis*); 43. 12 (*sraoshō*); 51. 6 (*khshathrā*); 53. 9 (*khshathrem*).

Exception, 32. 1.

II. *Ahura* occurs in any case but the vocative, together with other divinities:

1. The singular is used because the subject is addressed or spoken of in separate clauses, or because all but *ahura* are in some other oblique case than in the instrumental, or are in the instrumental governed by a preposition or some other single word (avoiding therefore confusion with the vocative):

28. 8; 29. 6; 31. 2, 21; 32. 2, 12; 33. 5; 46. 12, 16; 47. 2; 51. 17, 22; 53. 1, 4.

2. The plural is used because there are several subjects with the plural verb, or several divinities in apposition with one pronoun, e. g. *vāo* :

31. 4; 45. 5 : 28. 3; 29. 3.

3. In 33. 11, the singular asserts the unity of the various divinities, while in the following parts of the strophe all are addressed in conjunction.

4. In 31. 6, the subject of *vakhshat* is questionable; should have been classed "obscure." If we are to supply *mazdāo*, taken from the preceding dative, the passage does not belong here.

5. In 45. 8, *hōi* plainly refers to *ahurem* alone, *ashā* modifying the predication with the poet. This case also does not belong here.

6. There are fifteen places where the nominative of *ahura* is used, not falling under 1 to 5. As the form is unmistakable, these, with some exceptions, take the singular :

45. 6, 9, 10; 46. 17; 48. 3, 6; 51. 16, 21.

The exceptions are—

46. 13, plural seems due to a summing up of all the divinities :

51. 15, if *vē* includes *ahura*, to be explained as 46. 13;

47. 1, if *dān* is a finite verb, and *haur.* and *amer.* are its objects, I cannot explain the number.

III. *Ahura* is in the vocative; other divinities.

A. 7. The singular is due to separate clauses, etc., as in II. 1. (No confusion with the vocative possible.) Exceptions :

32. 6, *vē mazdā ashāicā*;

32. 9, *mazdā ashāicā yūshmaibyā*;

33. 13 a, b, *vē* although oblique cases;

50. 4, *vāo mazdā ahurā hadā ashā*, etc.;

(43. 14 contains *khshathrā* : see page 191, line 3 from below).

8. 28. 7, separate clauses resumed by plural.

9. 28. 9; 49. 6, *vāo* explained by the addition of *ashem* or *ashem manas vohūcā*.

Of 7, 8, and 9 there are forty-four cases, but the strophes are not quoted, since the enumeration would probably seem trivial to some, and at all events would require a lengthy discussion for some strophes; 34. 3a and 34. 7a are among them (34. 11 contains *ārmaitis* and 43. 14 *khshathrā*).

B. There remain fifty-six passages with the vocative *mazdā* together with *ashā* or *vohū manānhā*, or both, not governed by a preposition or other single word, and therefore not plainly in the instrumental. In the enumeration, I have disregarded other forms in the same strophe covered by I., II., and III. A : also, in order to reduce the problem to its lowest terms, cases such as *ashā* in 50. 11, where the name is associated with the action of the prophet, if, in the same strophe, another name occurs—*vohū manānhā* in this instance—sufficient in itself to show the difficulty. Were *ashā* in 50. 11 the only name in the strophe, it would have been included in the list below.

1. Vocative *mazdā* with singular of inflected words (*a.* = *ashā*; *v. m.* = *vohū manānhā*):

a. *ashā* or *vohū manan̄hā* instrumental, associated with the action of *ahura* :

31. 3, a.; 33. 10, a. and v. m.; 34. 12, a.; 43. 2, a.; 44. 1, a.; 51. 7, v. m.

b. Instrumental associated with the action of others than *ahura* :

29. 7, v. m.; 30. 8, v. m.; 33. 6, a.; 34. 4, a.; 44. 2, a.; 44. 6, v. m.; 44. 18, a.; 46. 3, v. m.; 47. 3, v. m.; 48. 8, a.; 48. 12, a. and v. m.; 49. 5, a. and v. m. (v. m. governed, however, by the intervening verb, according to Geldner, KZ. xxviii. 260) 51. 18, a.

c. Obscurely connected with the action of *ahura* :

28. 6, v. m.; 31. 3, a.; 32. 6, v. m.; 34. 15, a. and v. m.; 43. 6, v. m.; 43. 7, v. m.; 43. 9, v. m.; 43. 11, v. m.; 43. 13, v. m.; 43. 15, v. m.; 44. 15, a.; 49. 1, v. m.; 49. 7, a.; 49. 12, a. and v. m. (in 49. 12, *vē* resumes all).

d. Obscure association ; not with *ahura* :

34. 9, a.

e. Case and connection obscure :

46. 10, v. m.; 50. 2, a.; 33. 12, a. and v. m.

2. *Ahurā*, vocative, with plural of inflected words.

a. Obscure case : associated with the action of *ahura* :

29. 10a, a.; 31. 5 (part), a.; 34. 6, a. and v. m.; 34. 7, a.; 46. 18, a.; 49. 8, a.; 50. 5, a.; 50. 7, a.; 50. 8, a.; 50. 9, a.; 50. 10, a.; 51. 2, a. and v. m. (51. 2 afterwards employs singular).

b. Obscure case ; associated with the action of others than *ahura* :

28. 2, v. m.; 33. 13c, a.; 34. 5, a. and v. m.

c. Both case and association obscure :

33. 8, a.; 34. 14, a.

d. Instrumental associated with *ahura* :

50. 11, v. m.

And to III. B may perhaps be added 29. 3 and 30. 7 (both without naming *ahura*. See page 191, line 3 from below). Also 31. 6 and 45. 8, belonging to II. 4 and 5, without a vocative of *ahura*, should be taken into consideration in connection with III. B ; also 44. 16, which associates v. m. with *seraoshō*, the subject of a singular verb.

Now in some of the strophes classed under III. B it is possible to account for the number in accordance with the regular rule of Indo-European grammar : for instance, those in which the singular can be explained by supposing that the divinities are in the instrumental, as agents of *ahura*, and especially those in which they are associated with the action of others than *ahura*.

But, to say nothing of the inevitable uncertainty of the determination of the case and function in some of these, this explanation is inconsistent with the plural where the divinity is agent of *ahura*, or of some one else, and therefore presumably in the instrumental.

On the other hand, if the plural is to be explained in 29. 10, etc., by assuming that *ashā* and *vohū manan̄hā* are vocatives,

or (contra Caland) used in an instrumental of association, how is the series 28. 6, etc., with the singular, to be explained?

Finally, if by some dubious expedient we make a more or less satisfactory disposition of all the strophes falling under III. B, there still remain the irregularities falling under I., II., and III. A, and the further evident fact that even the regular singulars or the regular plurals I., II., and III. A, seem to have been suggested mainly by the fact that the word or words chosen to fix the number were in forms which, so to speak, made a forcible impression upon the grammatical sense of the author, or compiler, and prove no greater acquaintance with the language than might be fairly expected of such men as the Pahlavi translators, to say nothing of earlier cento makers.

It is not worth while to force *vi et armis* upon the text a greater degree of grammatical accuracy than that observed by its compilers, and it is a waste of labor to discuss the exceptions.

There are some instances of a use of both plural and singular in the same strophe. The mere change, without considering the reasons for the choice of either number in itself, presents no difficulty.

It occurs in 29. 10; 31. 5; 32. 6; 33. 11, 13; 34. 3 (if *thra-ostā* is verb); 34. 7, 15; 43. 11, 13; 44. 1; 46. 10, 13 (if *vē* refers to the divinities); 49. 12; 51. 2, 4, 15: 44. 17 is obscure or inexplicable.

In some cases, the plural sums up together the persons used separately with the singular in other parts of the strophe, or the address is changed; or a single attribute is referred to one divinity in contrast with a prevailing plural, or *vice versa*.

The variation in assigning *khshathra* to one in exclusion of the others, or *vice versa* (32. 6; 34. 15; 43. 13), is quite in accordance with the general absence of precise notions in connection with the attributes of the divinities.

Case Statistics.—*Mazdāh-* occurs 201 times, and *ahura-* 138 (although *ahura-* is not always used of the divinity). Only the frequency of these words concerns us, and particularly the vocative. *Mazdā* occurs 144 times; *ahurā* 82. I have not studied the possible occurrence of *mazdā* as an instrumental (of the *a*-declension). Bartholomae seems to regard it as such in 50. 3. The genitive occurs six times, dative four, accusative five.

The names *mazdāh-* and *ahura-* stand on absolute equality, except in frequency of use. At first, considering the fact that *ahura-* falls at the close of a pada 34 times and *mazdāh-* about 19, I suspected that the former was used in a predicate sense, as if the prophet were proclaiming 'as a new gospel the headship of *Mazda*.' Strophe 46. 9 is very suggestive. But there is very little evidence in favor of this interpretation, while

mazdāo srāvī ahurō, 45. 10, is in itself sufficient to deter from much inquiry in this direction. This passage is of capital importance.

Asha- occurs 156 times (in one strophe twice), genitive 20 times, ablative 18, dative 10; in *-em* 26; in *-ā* 82; all together in about two-thirds of the strophes. *Ashem* is nominative in 31. 4; 33. 11; 43. 16; 49. 3; 51. 4; obscure in 29. 11; 46. 7; 51. 20; elsewhere accusative.

As to *ashā*, one feels reluctant to attempt precise determinations. There are, however, 13 places where it is governed by a preposition or some other single word: 28. 8; 29. 7; 32. 2; 34. 2, 11; 44. 9, 10; 46. 13, 16; 48. 11; 49. 5; 50. 4, 6. In 3 cases certainly vocative: 28. 3, 5, 7. In 7 cases perhaps vocative: 30. 1; 31. 5? 34. 6, 7, 9, 12; 49. 7. The following 28 seem to me instrumental: 30. 7; 31. 3, 16; 33. 6, 10, 12; 34. 4, 12; 43. 2, 6; 44. 1, 2, 15, 18; 45. 6, 8, 10; 48. 1, 3, 6, 8, 12; 49. 1, 9; 50. 11; 51. 1, 16, 18. Perhaps 31. 5 is rather instrumental than vocative. The remaining passages, 32 in all, are obscure, and with these rather than with the vocative should, perhaps, be classed 4 more, viz. 34. 6, 7, 9; 49. 7. The use as vocative, apart from the "obscure" passages, seems restricted—remarkably so, considering the nature of the document. But see close of paper.

Ashā might, without stretching one's ingenuity too far, and without considering the number (sing. or plur.) of the pronouns, be regarded as an adjective with *mazdā*, the vocative, in some 28 cases (not worth citation or close counting), or with other words in 46. 3, 9. But I know of but one passage (*ashahyā*, 46. 14) where any other case-form than *ashā* could be treated as an adjective. Now, if the word meant 'pure,' or anything of the sort, it ought to occur frequently, as adjective, in the other oblique cases; and this alone appears to me a sufficient reason for dismissing any further consideration of the stem as that part of speech. Were it ever such, the number of instances of this use might be greatly increased by considering it, when standing alone, as a substitute for *ahurā* or *mazdā*, and meaning 'O Holy One!'

V. manah- occurs 121 times (in one strophe twice): genitive, 49; in *-as* 11; in *-hā* 61. Of the forms in *-as*, I consider 5 accusative: 28. 5, 9, 11; 31. 7; 49. 10; 4 nominative: 30. 4; 33. 11; 34. 8; 51. 4. One, 28. 3, might be either vocative or accusative, and 29. 11 is obscure.

It were better to kill a water-dog, and assume all the Zarathustrian pains and penalties for the act, than to adventure a determination of the forms in *-hā*. However, 7 or 8 are governed by prepositions or other single words: 28. 4; 32. 2; 44. 9; 45. 9; 46. 12; 47. 3; 49. 5? 50. 4. Instrumental appears

to me to be 49. 5 and 21 others: 28. 6; 29. 7; 30. 8; 31. 4; 31. 6; 32. 6; 33. 8, 10; 44. 1, 6, 16; 45. 6, 10; 46. 9, 13; 47. 1; 48. 12; 49. 2, 7; 50. 11; 51. 21. The remaining passages, 32 in all, are "obscure." It will be understood that some of these "instrumentals" are sociative.

The superlative, included above, occurs eleven times, and in one place occurs something, not included, that looks like a comparative. In 77 padas, *manah*-falls at the close. The adjective and noun are often separated, sometimes by words not syntactically connected with it—a peculiarity illustrating the separation of the elements of Caland's hypothetical compound of *mazdāh*-with *asha*-.

If *mazda* is a new divinity for the makers of these hymns, as we have them, *vohumano* and *asha* are such, and all the rest.

The questions relating to the use of number in inflected words connected with the names of divinities, and to the special case to which the forms *ashā* and *vohū manānhā* are to be referred, belong together. It seems to me that, from that point of view which looks for a consistent syntax, nothing can be more just than the remarks of Caland (KZ. xxx. 260; xxxi. 540), although very many students will be inclined to consider that the propriety of assuming a sociative instrumental still remains an open question, especially when the great frequency of this use in the Veda is remembered. Places such as 44. 6 appear to demand this explanation, and the use of a case with or without a preposition in the same relation is by no means an infrequent phenomenon in language.

Caland would meet the difficulty by adding to the scheme of Gathic cases a vocative and nominative *vohū manānhā* and a nominative *ashā*. Pischel's attempt to find a dative in some of these forms appears* to be another essay in the same direction, and, so far as concerns the principle involved, with equal justification. Now it is possible that Caland means to imply something precisely equivalent to the suggestion at the close of this paper, especially considering his remark in lines 34-6, page 260, vol. xxxi. of Kuhn's *Zeitschrift*; but I judge not, since he gives a formal explanation of the manner in which such case-forms might have originated (and, by the way, in so doing, practically denies any claim of the Gāthās to be considered the preaching of a new faith). If so, the present paper must be regarded as a contribution in favor of his view. If he means that *vohū manānhā*, for instance, formed part of the current declension in the spoken language, why not extend this method still further, and call *ashāi* (32. 9) a vocative, *vāo* (32. 1) a singular, and *avazazaṭ* (24. 9) a plural? Such extraordinary inflections, like the summaries in the pre-

* I know Pischel's views only at second hand.

ceding pages, based upon the assumption of a consistent syntax and fully significant content, are equivalent to a *reductio ad absurdum* of the assumption itself. The difference between such a treatment of the text and that given to it by the Pahlavi translators is simply this: the latter neglects grammar to force a certain sense upon the text; the former forces a probable sense upon a recalcitrant grammar. Such a procedure might be legitimate did it assume a declension according with the method of change in Indo-European grammar, which does not commonly present two different case-forms, each with two distinct uses, the same for both; did it also harmonize with everything else in the hymns, and did it explain all the difficulties. Geldner shows that it fails in this last requirement. It is indeed very probable that no treatment of the Gāthās will explain everything, but more complete success may be demanded from any method which assumes that the text is, in its own way, grammatically correct.

The details to which attention has been called in the preceding pages, especially the peculiar absence of definite significance in the attributes of the divinities, and the absence of clear connection of their names with the tenor of the strophes, together with the important detail that a large percentage of the difficult passages are connected with forms identical with the vocative or resembling the vocative in termination (*v. manaiñhā*)—all these taken together produce an impression such as might result were the hymns in their present form the work of men whose purpose it was to put together more or less extensive fragments of earlier date (compare again Caland's remark, previously quoted), taking good care to attain an accurate metrical form; who had probably in view the needs of a ritual of some description, but to whom the formula, charm, or incantation, the *māthra*, was the thing most at heart, rather than accurate syntax and coherent meaning. The importance of such formulæ, with or without sense, is widely recognized over the whole Orient; and there are not wanting passages in the Gāthās themselves, especially in the first section of the hymns, in which the poet seems to be seeking for some such form of words rather than for spiritual enlightenment.

Such compositions deal extensively in vocative utterances and in litany-like lists of the names of divinities. This demand met, and the whole being put into proper metrical form, the men who made up the cento might, perhaps from partial ignorance both of the language and of the original thought, have given less consideration to sense and syntax. Furthermore, some defects in both might well be due to the difficulties attending metrical composition.

There are many reasons why no one could suspect that the whole bulk of the poems was produced in this way: for one

thing, the real, very human Zarathustra is too distinct. And it is a striking fact that, despite the difficulties connected with the proper names, an abridgment of the text which contains only the names and the words closely connected with them is much less obscure than a great part of the remaining matter—as if certain old prayers had formed the groundwork.

As to the date of this possible *rifacimento* no opinion can be formed. Such knowledge as is implied in the partially correct use of inflections is precisely of the sort which might result from the study of the earlier pieces by men who no longer spoke the dialect in which they were written. Of course the particular passages are earlier than genuine quotations or translations of them; apart from this consideration, the poems might have been the work of yesterday. In no sense can the much abused word “primitive” be applied to them.

I am not disposed to attribute to the above hypothesis more than that tentative value which belongs to all other translations or comments connected with the Gāthās. It might account satisfactorily for the peculiar problem presented by the “contrast between the Vedic language of the hymns and the complete severance from Vedic thought.” In its application, it would lead to a very different procedure in translating certain strophes, especially those in which vocatives or forms resembling vocatives occur, and would explain the use of the words *ashā* and *vohū manānhā*, now so often obscure in their relation to the context, and therefore so often rendered by equally meaningless adverbs. They would often be treated as having the value of mere interjections, and should then be “translated” by simply transferring the words, in the form as names, to the English text. Of course one of the first results would be to render valueless many of the case-determinations recorded in the preceding pages. It would no longer be worth while to grope about for special rules, of doubtful value, to explain such collocations as *mazdā ashāicā* 29. 8, and *mazdā ashemoā* 49. 6. The general tendency to introduce the direct address disturbs the syntax in these strophes, just as, in 43. 9 and 43. 15a, it has produced a meaningless preface to the strophe.

Many of those difficult passages in which the subject of a verb in the third person is obscure may, without hesitation, be referred to a near vocative *mazdā* (or its equivalent). The most important case of this sort is the forty-fourth hymn, where *vohū manānhā*, if “parsed” at all, may be parsed as an instrumental. In 31. 9, the fact that *ahurā* is vocative is not a sufficient reason for referring *yē vidvāo* to any other antecedent. Similar turns of thought, though less obscure in construction, occur in 31. 7 and 45. 4, where the third person and the address are found together.